

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel, comprising:

- a peripheral wheel rim;
- a central hub with a hub flange;
- a plurality of spokes extending between the rim and hub, wherein said spokes have a first portion connected to said rim and a second portion opposed to said first portion;
- wherein at least one of said spokes is a duplex spoke, including two structural spans, each extending between said rim and said hub with a common portion connected to said hub flange;
- wherein said at least one duplex spoke includes engagement means having a non-uniform region of variable cross section geometry at said common portion to ~~directly~~ engage said hub flange and said hub flange includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage said duplex spoke engagement means;
- and wherein said hub flange engagement means includes means to provide relative slippage control between the hub flange and the duplex spoke engagement means.

Claim 2. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said wheel is a tension-spoke wheel, including spoke pre-tension.

Claim 3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said duplex spoke is assembled to said hub flange in a generally radial direction for connection between said duplex spoke and said hub flange.

Claim 4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said duplex spoke is assembled to said hub flange in a generally axial direction for connection between said duplex spoke and said hub flange.

Claim 5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said duplex spoke is assembled to said hub flange in a generally tangential direction for connection between said duplex spoke and said hub flange.

Claim 6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said hub flange includes a reinforcement element, wherein said reinforcement element provides ~~compressive strength~~ reinforcement to the hub flange to resist spoke tension loads induced by said duplex spokes.

Claim 7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said two structural spans of said duplex spoke are axially offset from each other.

Claim 8. (CANCELLED)

Claim 9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 8, wherein said wheel is a tension-spoke wheel, including spoke pre-tension and wherein said pre-tension induces flexure in said kinked region and wherein said flexure causes said duplex spoke to bear against said hub flange engagement means.

Claim 10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 7, wherein the distance of said axial offset is generally equal to the axial cross-sectional thickness of said duplex spoke in the region of at least one of said structural spans.

Claim 11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 7, wherein the distance of said axial offset is greater than the axial cross-sectional thickness of said duplex spoke in the region of at least one of said structural spans.

Claim 12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 7, wherein said duplex spokes includes a clockwise radiating span and a counterclockwise radiating span and wherein the clockwise radiating span of a first of said duplex spokes crosses past the counterclockwise span of a second of said duplex spokes.

Claim 13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said engagement means of said duplex spoke has matched surface-to-surface contact with said engagement means of said hub flange.

Claim 14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said duplex spoke includes a kink to create the engagement means of said duplex spoke.

Claim 15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, including an angle between said first and second structural spans wherein said angle, as measured radially outboard of said hub flange, is greater than or equal to 180 degrees.

Claim 16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, including an angle between said first and second structural spans wherein said angle, as measured radially outboard of said hub flange, is less than 180 degrees.

Claim 17. (CANCELLED)

Claim 18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to ~~claim 17~~ Claim 49, wherein said two structural spans of said duplex spoke are axially offset from each other.

Claim 19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to ~~claim 17~~ Claim 49, wherein said engagement means on said overmolded slug is generally perpendicular to at least one of said structural spans of said duplex spoke.

Claim 20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to ~~claim 17~~ Claim 49, wherein said engagement means on said overmolded slug extends in a generally axial direction.

Claim 21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to ~~claim 17~~ Claim 49, wherein said engagement means on said overmolded slug has matched surface-to-surface contact with said engagement means on said hub flange.

Claim 22. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to ~~claim 17~~ Claim 49, wherein said overmolded slug constitutes a region of enlarged cross-section geometry as compared to the cross section geometry of the structural span of said duplex spoke.

Claim 23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said duplex spoke includes at least two of said duplex spoke engagement means and wherein said hub flange includes at least two of said hub flange engagement means and wherein a first of said engagement means of said duplex spoke is engaged to a first of said engagement means of said hub flange for relative slippage control between said duplex spoke and said hub flange in one tangential direction and wherein a second of said engagement means of said duplex spoke is engaged to a second of said engagement means of said hub flange for relative slippage control between said duplex spoke and said hub flange in the opposite tangential direction.

Claim 24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 23, wherein said at least two engagement means of said hub flange are axially staggered with respect to each other.

Claim 25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to Claim 23, wherein ~~said~~ at least two of said engagement means of said hub flange are arranged to create a wedging engagement with ~~the said~~ at least two of said engagement means of said duplex spoke.

Claim 26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 25, including spoke pre-tension, wherein said spoke pre-tension serves to press said at least two engagement means of said duplex spoke against said at least two engagement means of said hub flange to augment said wedging engagement.

Claim 27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said hub flange includes an open cavity for engagement with said duplex spoke.

Claim 28. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 27, wherein said open cavity includes two open ends, with said first of said structural spans extending through a first of said open ends and a second of said structural spans extending through a second of said open ends.

Claim 29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to Claim 27, wherein said open cavity includes a generally radially extending spoke bracing surface, wherein said duplex spoke contacts and is engaged to said spoke bracing surface.

Claim 30. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to ~~claim 28~~ Claim 29, including at least two of said spoke bracing surfaces, wherein a first of said structural spans of said duplex spoke contacts a first of said spoke bracing surfaces and wherein a second of said structural spans of said duplex spoke contacts a second of said spoke bracing surfaces.

Claim 31. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to Claim 27, wherein said open cavity includes at least two recesses, wherein a first of said recesses is ~~engaged~~ mated with a first structural span of said duplex spoke and wherein a second of said recesses is ~~engaged~~ mated with a second structural span of said duplex spoke.

Claim 32. (CANCELLED)

Claim 33. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said hub flange is made of polymeric material.

Claim 34. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 33, wherein said polymeric material includes reinforcement fibers.

Claim 35. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said duplex spoke includes a continuous structural element, wherein said continuous structural element includes said two structural spans and includes at least a portion of said common portion.

Claim 36. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 35, wherein said continuous structural element is made of metallic material.

Claim 37. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 35, wherein said continuous structural element includes high strength reinforcement fibers.

Claim 38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 37, wherein said high strength fibers are impregnated within a polymer matrix.

Claim 39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 38, wherein said polymer matrix is a thermoplastic polymer matrix.

Claim 40. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 37, wherein said high strength fibers are continuous fibers that extend through said common portion.

Claim 41. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said spoke engagement means has a region of variable cross section geometry, wherein said variable cross section geometry provides an overlying engagement with the hub flange.

Claim 42. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 41, wherein said region of variable cross-section geometry is an integral portion of said duplex spoke.

Claim 43. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to Claim 41, wherein said variable cross section geometry includes a projecting portion extending outwardly from said spoke that engages a projecting portion extending ~~outwardly~~ from said hub flange.

Claim 44. (CANCELLED)

Claim 45. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said wheel includes a plurality of said duplex spokes.

Claim 46. (CANCELLED)

Claim 47. (CANCELLED)

Claim 48. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said means to provide said relative slippage control comprises duplex spoke engagement means operative to at least one of (1) provide bracing against spoke tension and (2) to transmit torque between the hub flange and ~~the spokes~~ said rim.

Claim 49. (NEW) A wheel, comprising:

a peripheral wheel rim;

a central hub with a hub flange;

a plurality of spokes extending between the rim and hub, wherein said spokes have a first portion connected to said rim and a second portion opposed to said first portion;

wherein at least one of said spokes is a duplex spoke, including two structural spans, each extending between said rim and said hub with a common portion connected to said hub flange;

wherein said at least one duplex spoke includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage

said hub flange and said hub flange includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage said duplex spoke engagement means;

wherein said hub flange engagement means includes means to provide relative slippage control between the hub flange and the duplex spoke engagement means;

and wherein said duplex spoke includes an overmolded slug and wherein said engagement means of said duplex spoke is located on said overmolded slug.

Claim 50. (NEW) A wheel, comprising:

a peripheral wheel rim;

a central hub with a hub flange;

a plurality of spokes extending between the rim and hub, wherein said spokes have a first portion connected to said rim and a second portion opposed to said first portion;

wherein at least one of said spokes is a duplex spoke, including two structural spans, each extending between said rim and said hub with a common portion connected to said hub flange;

wherein said at least one duplex spoke includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage said hub flange and said hub flange includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage said duplex spoke engagement means;

wherein said hub flange engagement means includes means to provide relative slippage control between the hub flange and the duplex spoke engagement means;

wherein said hub flange includes an open cavity for engagement with said duplex spoke;

wherein said open cavity includes at least two recesses, wherein a first of said recesses is engaged with a first structural span of said duplex spoke and wherein a second of said

recesses is engaged with a second structural span of said duplex spoke;
and including an axially extending gap between said first recess and said second recess
for passage of said duplex spoke.

Claim 51. (NEW) A wheel, comprising:

a peripheral wheel rim;

a central hub with a hub flange;

a plurality of spokes extending between the rim and hub, wherein said spokes have a first
portion connected to said rim and a second portion opposed to said first portion;

wherein at least one of said spokes is a duplex spoke, including two structural spans, each
extending between said rim and said hub with a common portion connected to said hub
flange;

wherein said at least one duplex spoke includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage
said hub flange and said hub flange includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage said
duplex spoke engagement means;

wherein said hub flange engagement means includes means to provide relative slippage
control between the hub flange and the duplex spoke engagement means;

wherein said spoke engagement means has a region of variable cross section geometry,
wherein said variable cross section geometry provides an overlying engagement with the
hub flange;

wherein said variable cross section geometry includes a projecting portion extending
outwardly from said spoke that engages a projecting portion extending outwardly from
said hub flange;

and including a spoke extension affixed to said duplex spoke, wherein said spoke extension includes said projecting portion of said spoke.

Claim 52. (NEW) A wheel, comprising:

a peripheral wheel rim;

a central hub with a hub flange;

a plurality of spokes extending between the rim and hub, wherein said spokes have a first portion connected to said rim and a second portion opposed to said first portion;

wherein at least one of said spokes is a duplex spoke, including two structural spans, each extending between said rim and said hub with a common portion connected to said hub flange;

wherein said at least one duplex spoke includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage said hub flange and said hub flange includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage said duplex spoke engagement means;

wherein said hub flange engagement means includes means to provide relative slippage control between the hub flange and the duplex spoke engagement means;

and including an auxiliary member, wherein the auxiliary member serves to at least one of retain, engage, and clamp said spoke to said hub flange.

Claim 53. (NEW) A wheel, comprising:

a peripheral wheel rim;

a central hub with a hub flange;

a plurality of spokes extending between the rim and hub, wherein said spokes have a first

portion connected to said rim and a second portion opposed to said first portion;
wherein at least one of said spokes is a duplex spoke, including two structural spans, each extending between said rim and said hub with a common portion connected to said hub flange;
wherein said at least one duplex spoke includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage said hub flange and said hub flange includes engagement means to ~~directly~~ engage said duplex spoke engagement means;
wherein said hub flange engagement means includes means to provide relative slippage control between the hub flange and the duplex spoke engagement means;
and including an intermediary member, wherein said spoke is engaged to said intermediary member and said intermediary member is connected to said hub flange.

Claim 54. (NEW) A wheel according to Claim 6, wherein said central hub includes an axle and wherein said reinforcement element is a cylindrical element surrounding said axle.

Claim 55. (NEW) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said two structural spans of said duplex spoke are generally aligned without an offset kink.

Claim 56. (NEW) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said duplex spoke engagement means is deformable to adjust the fitment between said duplex spoke engagement means and said hub flange engagement means.

Claim 57. (NEW) A wheel according to Claim 1, wherein said at least one duplex spoke includes engagement means to directly engage said hub flange and said hub flange includes engagement means to directly engage said duplex spoke engagement means